

REMARKS**I. Claim status**

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation of claim 10. Support for the amendment is found in corresponding claims 1 and 10 as filed. Claim 10 has been cancelled. Claims 11, 14, and 18 have been amended to correct claim dependency. Therefore, claims 1-9 and 11-49 remain pending. No new matter is entered by way of this amendment.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 19-22, 27-29, 31, 34-45, and 48 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,246,772 (to Manning). Specifically, the Examiner states that Manning teaches cellulose and bicomponent fiber layers, as well as latex binders in the outer layer. The Examiner concedes that Manning fails to teach the claimed basis weights, and amounts of fiber and binder, however concludes that such values may be obtained by one skilled in the art through routine experimentation. Additionally, the Examiner concedes that Manning fails to teach the claimed carbon dioxide gas generating properties, but states that such a compound would be inherent to the cellulose material. Applicants traverse the rejection and respectfully request reconsideration.

Applicants submit that the claimed invention is not obvious over the cited art. Applicants disagree with the Examiner's assertion that one skilled in the art could not arrive at the claimed invention, based on the teachings of Manning. Manning fails to teach the carbon dioxide generating component altogether, which is an essential feature of the claimed invention. Applicants submit that the inherent properties of cellulose material (if present as the Examiner states) do not amount to the carbon dioxide composition claimed in the present invention. Nonetheless, in order to further along prosecution of the present application, applicants have amended claim 1 to specify that the carbon dioxide generating composition comprises a weak base and a weak acid. Support for this amendment is found in original claim 10. As discussed in further detail below, the Examiner found claim 10 to contain allowable subject matter. Therefore, applicants submit that the present amendment renders claim 1 allowable.

Accordingly, the rejection is rendered moot, and applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 6, 8, 9, 25, 26, 30, 32, and 33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Manning in view of Ouederni et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0089443). For the reasons stated above, the Examiner applies Manning to the presently rejected claims in the same manner. The Examiner concedes that Manning fails to teach the bicomponent binder fiber in combination with a latex binder. According to the Examiner, Ouederni teaches the combination of bicomponent binder fiber and binder. The Examiner concludes that one skilled in the art would form the layers of Manning with the binders taught in Ouederni. Applicants traverse the rejection and respectfully request reconsideration.

Applicants submit that the claimed invention is not obvious over Manning in view of Ouederni. As noted above, Applicants submit that Manning fails to teach the carbon dioxide generating composition. To further along prosecution, applicants have amended claim 1 to recite that the the carbon dioxide generating composition comprises a weak base and a weak acid. Accordingly, the present rejection is rendered moot, and applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

III. Allowable subject matter

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's allowance of claims 2, 10-18, 46, 47 and 49. Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitation of claim 10. As such, applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-9 and 11-49 are now in condition for allowance.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered and that all pending claims be allowed and the case passed to issue. If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below. Applicants believe no fees are due at this time. However, if any fees are required, the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fee to Deposit Account No. 02-4377.

Respectfully submitted,

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